

OUT
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STORIES
OF
MIGRATION



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INTRODUCTION

BRIAN COHEN

America is bound together by the idea that, whether in our own lifetime or that of our ancestors, we have all come from somewhere. Perhaps our family history here begins with distant generations who came to this country to escape poverty, unemployment, war, or persecution. We may have pictures in our family albums of people from faraway places, dressed in odd clothes, but whose faces look uncannily familiar to us. We may be the child or grandchild of someone who spoke halting English, with a strange accent, and who struggled to make a better life for their family. Or we may have come ourselves to this land of opportunity and freedom, of English muffins and nachos (American inventions, both), of French fries and Disney, of Barack Obama and Donald Trump.

This book, and the project of which it is a part, is about migration, about the process of moving—or being moved—to a new place. In its most romantic formulation, to come to America is an expression of hope, a leap of faith. The journey can be laced with uncertainty, sometimes a last resort, maybe only the best of many bad choices; but always holding out the promise of better things to come. Most distant in time was the journey of the First Peoples, around 15,000 years ago, across the land bridge to what would later be known as America. In its darkest iteration, coming to America was not in any way a choice; rather, it was an abduction, a forced mass-migration that led to the enslavement of entire generations. We are not simply a nation of immigrants—to immigrate suggests agency—but we have all come from somewhere else.

Migration today—whether we mean migrants, immigrants, or refugees—has become one of the most divisive aspects of our contemporary discourse. Or perhaps it is more accurate to say that it continues to divide us; for the arguments both for and against the newcomer today echo throughout our history. A closer look at a timeline of our immigration laws show how the entrance into the country has widened and narrowed since its beginning. Not all were welcomed, let alone considered equal. A century

ago, Irish and Italian immigrants were characterized as criminals; today we are told that Mexicans are rapists. But choosing to learn each other's stories offers us a sense of belonging to something larger than ourselves.

Rather than looking at migrants as groups of faceless, nameless stereotypes, *Out of Many* gives us individual stories: Nate Guidry's photo-essay presents a Mexican single father of two young girls, his struggles and triumphs as genuine and as mundane as those of the next person; writer Reid Frazier's vignette of a woman from Congo shows us a young mother who finds herself learning English, and washing dishes, in Pittsburgh's West End.

The journeys described in this project involve movements of people to and within America, and from across the globe, reflecting the broader American story through the lens of Pittsburgh's experience. Erika Beras's oral histories of the 20th-century Great Migration provide a difficult, but important context of African-Americans' search for a less segregated environment within their own country. The oral histories recounted in her essay weave together seemingly trivial detail with deeply disturbing accounts of life growing up African-American in the middle of the 20th century, and make clear how moving away does not always resolve those challenges.

Some stories are set in the most immediate present. Photographer Scott Goldsmith met Bhutanese refugees airside, as they landed at Pittsburgh International Airport, documenting their very first moments in America. In contrast, my photographs of social and ethnic clubs, houses of worship, groceries, and mutual-benefit societies, reveal histories physically embedded in brick and stone. The buildings present a broad sweep of the communities that settled over the past century or so, establishing themselves as residents, millions of threads in our social fabric. These structures bear witness to a continuous social churning: we may feel that our presence here is a constant, that it is only other people who are new. The buildings suggest otherwise.

As migrants, we bring with us different names, foods, and customs. We may look different from our new neighbors. We may wear different clothes, speak different languages, and worship different gods—or none at all. We will elicit curiosity, and fear. We will be embraced by some, and rejected by others. But our paths are interwoven: each individual's journey becomes a part of the culture we share.

And we make new friends: Annie O'Neill brings together old and new immigrants, encouraging them to share their stories with each other, and with us. In her double-portraits, each photograph depicts two people, one of whom has been here significantly longer than the other. Some have never met before; many could hardly be more different, but there is a chemistry. They have become instantly connected. Yet these are not simply charming portraits of the coming together of strangers (though they are that, too)—they are the embodiment of one of this country's noblest ideals, encoded by a group of people who themselves came from somewhere else, that we are all created equal.

No one is more or less American than any other, a lesson that is demonstrated so touchingly in one of Lynn Johnson's photographs of a naturalization ceremony—a record of the very moment of becoming officially American. They look like they could have come from anywhere: six people, lined up behind a desk, right hands raised, swearing the oath of allegiance. (A seventh—we can see his arm—stands just outside of the frame. Other raised hands are visible around the room.) On the desk in front of the group lies an array of papers, and a pamphlet titled "Facts For Citizens." At their center, a man in an ill-fitting suit holds his hand high, as if to ask a question; his gesture is both eager and earnest, a poignant reminder of how much there is to learn when one arrives in a new country, and how much it means to become an American citizen. Johnson catches up with these newly minted citizens at home, as they embark on the process of becoming American, culturally.

E Pluribus Unum—“Out of Many, One”—has informed the identity of this country since its inception. We have all come from somewhere. We have come alone, or with our families. We have come because we want to, and because we have no other choice. We have lived here for generations, and we have just arrived. This is a project about us, about the stranger in all of us. What we see and read on the pages that follow offers a glimpse of our collective story. It is the hope of the team that sharing this will encourage a sense of empathy among us, an appeal to what Lincoln described as “the better angels of our nature.”

OUT OF MANY

REID FRAZIER

The Signs are All Around Us // The signs of Pittsburgh's immigrant past are hard to miss. See the onion-domed churches, rising above old neighborhoods and mill towns; the grand old synagogues, of Pittsburgh's East End; the dozens of ethnic social clubs facing out on soot-dusted main streets. And of course, the place names: Deutschtown, Polish Hill.

The contributions of immigrants are a part of the city's lore—you could call it a source code—and form a sense of Pittsburgh's uniqueness, a feeling that this city is not like anywhere else. It's not East Coast, it's not Midwest, it's not really Appalachia. It's got its own dialect and colorful jargon, and food (more like a food-style), each heavily influenced by immigrants.

The appreciation for this past can verge on gauzy nostalgia—witness the foam-outfitted Pierogies racing each other through the outfield at Pittsburgh Pirates games; the crowds surrounding the Strip District's ethnic food stands, filled with people whose only language is English.

Pittsburgh's life continues to be shaped by its immigrant past, and the folkways laid down by all the immigrants that built it are now celebrated aspects of the city's story.

A century after immigration into the city peaked, a new wave of immigrants is arriving here now—different on the surface, but similar in so many ways, as those who came before them. Like them, they come as outsiders, to a place that belongs to others. But they come anyway; this is where they've decided to make lives for themselves; to work at menial jobs until they can cobble together enough to afford the things everyone wants—education for their children, comfort for their family, a place to call their own.

Like their predecessors, they leave behind countries racked by war, racial, ethnic, or religious violence and repression, and grinding poverty. And, again, like many of those immigrants that came to Pittsburgh before them, they have arrived in a country where their very right to be here is questioned. Their customs, their language, their religion, set them apart, making them vulnerable to prejudice and bigotry. They are also helping build the city anew, and look for opportunities to plant roots.

They are here now, and more will soon be coming. If history is a guide, the city's fate and future, its ability to stay relevant in whatever the next thing America becomes, may depend on them.

A Turnaround in Immigration // While other cities became magnets for immigrants from Asia and Latin America in the 1970s, '80s, and '90s, Pittsburgh didn't. By the end of the 20th century, only about one in twenty-five in Pittsburgh were born outside of the country.

While its numbers are still lower than the rest of the country's, Pittsburgh is attracting more immigrants today. The city's foreign-born population grew 32 percent from 2000 to 2015. (In Allegheny County, the number was 40 percent.) In the city of Pittsburgh, about one in three immigrants have come since 2010. Just over half are from Asia, around one in four are from Europe, 10 percent are from Latin America, and 9 percent are from Africa.

The reason: there are jobs here now. It's relatively safe, housing is relatively affordable, schools are relatively decent. And the region's immigrants, including many undocumented ones, are once again contributing to the local economy.

A stroll down Brookline Avenue, in Pittsburgh's South Hills, bears this out. There is a Middle Eastern food store owned by Lebanese immigrants, a tailor shop founded by an Italian immigrant,

a taqueria and Mexican food store. A recent study found about one in eighteen immigrants in Pittsburgh were entrepreneurs.

Nirmal Gurung is one of them. A Bhutanese refugee, he came to the U.S. in 2013. He started a business selling cell phones and calling cards at a booth he rented inside the Ghorkali Store, one of a half-dozen Bhutanese markets in Carrick.

The store is a hub for the local Nepali Bhutanese community in Pittsburgh. In the early '90s, Bhutan expelled around 100,000 ethnic Nepalis. It demolished their homes, and forced families who had lived in the country for over a century to leave. Some have only ever lived in refugee camps in Nepal prior to coming to Pittsburgh.

Nirmal, twenty-seven, is too young to have lived through his people's expulsion. And he's too busy with the present to worry too much about the past. When he isn't manning his store, Nirmal works weekends as a blackjack dealer at the Rivers Casino, where a lot of the Bhutanese have found jobs. It doesn't require a lot of English—only a willingness to work long hours, deep into the night. A typical weekend shift for Nirmal: Friday through Sunday, 10 p.m. to 6 a.m. "Everything," he says, "goes so fast in America."

He turned part of the store over to a former neighbor of his from the Beldangi refugee camp in Nepal. Menuka Tamang is a twenty-four-year-old with a quick smile; her young daughter helps out after school some days, popping chewing gum as her mom converses with Bhutanese women perusing the merchandise. She sells women's clothing: both American-style jeans and t-shirts, and traditional Nepali saris and dresses. Right now, she says, she has a small store; she wants to make it bigger.

Refugee // The thousands of immigrants who are now in Pittsburgh include many, like Nirmal Gurung and Menuka Tamang, who have come as refugees. The U.S. refugee program is administered through the Department of State, and is part of a worldwide effort through the United Nations to help some of the 65 million people who have been forcibly displaced from their homes. The U.S. has been accepting about 85,000 annually in recent years, though President Donald Trump has lowered that number by half. About 500 refugees a year are placed in Pittsburgh, one of about 200 cities and towns in the U.S. that accept them. Refugees are eligible for permanent residency in the U.S.; after five years, they are eligible to become U.S. citizens.

They come from Syria, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Congo. From Somalia and Myanmar. Nepali speakers from Bhutan, and Meskhetian Turks from Russia. Some were forced into the army. Or their families have lived in refugee camps for generations. They cannot go back to where they are from.

When they first descend the escalator at Pittsburgh International Airport, they are greeted by a refugee officer from a local agency. Some come with massive suitcases. Some come with just a small bag and the clothes on their back. The agencies help the refugees for three months; they place them in housing and pay rent on their apartment, help them pay for utilities, bus passes, and food. They also help them translate modern American life to them. The money to do all this comes from the federal government. But three months go by quickly; after that, apart from Medicaid and food stamps, which are available to all eligible citizens and legal immigrants in the U.S., the refugees are on their own.

Bahati Kasongo came into Pittsburgh at night, after taking four planes across three continents to get here. There was snow on the ground. She'd never seen snow.

She came with her two sisters; they were placed in an apartment in a housing complex in the West End. Other Africans had warned her: "The Americans are mean. They don't like Africans." But, she said she wouldn't just take their word for it. "I decided not to believe it before I saw it with my own eyes. I told my sisters: 'Don't be afraid.'" Some kids took the clothes off her drying line and dumped them on the hillside behind her apartment. But that only happened once, and she harbors no ill will.



Nirmal Gurung inside the Ghorkali Store



Bahati Kasongo with her daughter, Atifa

She has heard gunshots near her home. The pastor at her church says don't be afraid. Americans won't go after you unless you provoke them. There are so many things to learn. She initially was told her daughter, Atifa, wasn't old enough for school. But she's trying to figure out how to get her into the pre-school that is down the hill from her apartment. There are forms to fill out and countless administrative boxes to check. The agency that placed her was able to help her secure the basics of food and housing. But there are many other things they simply didn't have time to help her with, and now she is figuring these things out on her own, in a foreign language.

Back in Burundi, where she lived after leaving Congo several years ago, there was the Lake, Tanganyika. There was singing in her church choir, in Swahili, in French, in Kirundi, in Lingala, in English. Her English is passable, but limited. A few months into her life as an American, she understands more than she can speak. Her father is in Tampa now, but she doesn't have enough money to visit him. She takes two buses to get to her job washing dishes at a restaurant in Robinson Township. She works, comes home, takes care of Atifa, calls her husband back home in Burundi. She is trying to get him to come to the U.S. Would she ever want to go back to Africa? "No," she says. It's too dangerous. "*Je vais chercher la vie ici.*" I'm going to find my life here.

Waris and Alia // Their first night in America as refugees, they clambered up to their new apartment on the second floor, carrying luggage up the rickety wooden staircase. It was dark out—the flight from Kabul had taken a day and a half. The apartment was simple, nothing like the airy house with the garden they had lived in in Afghanistan. The bedroom window faced a busy street, where cars sped by at all hours. The small living-room had new brown carpet. There was almost no closet space—they would have to keep their clothes in a suitcase for a few months.

They bought a second-hand loveseat and chair for the living room. A television, unplugged, had been left behind by a previous tenant. Waris Faizi unpacked the one adornment he had brought with him from Afghanistan: the master's degree he received from Lehigh in 2011 in political science. He hung it on the living-room wall.

The children raced around the apartment, bounced up and down in their new home, excited. Soon there came a knock on the door. It was an elderly couple who lived downstairs: "Is there a herd of elephants up there?" the woman asked. He told her they would quiet their children.

The downstairs neighbors called the police on them, and, according to Waris, when the police determined they had done nothing wrong, called the county's child services division. The neighbor shouted at him. And once, angry, Waris shouted back.

They tried to appease the neighbors by giving the children phones to look at. It did keep them quiet. But the children, who had once been so talkative back in Afghanistan, now spoke less. Their doctor told Waris and Alia they're going through a transition. It's to be expected.

Their first Ramadan in Pittsburgh, they walked a few blocks to the Islamic Center for prayers, just as they had walked to mosque in Kabul. The thought crossed his mind: what if someone, driving by, or walking by late at night, said something to them, yelled at them, or worse. What then?

Everyone has seen the news stories of Muslims being threatened or attacked. When he walked out into the street, wearing jeans and t-shirt, Waris knew he looked vaguely Middle Eastern. Maybe he looked Muslim, maybe not. But Alia, wearing her brightly colored *chadar*, or head scarf, walking Yusra and Bushra in a stroller, everyone knew she was Muslim. They walked home from mosque that night without incident.

Even with these new worries, Waris hoped they were only temporary. And he had escaped the anxiety of living in Afghanistan, of having to hold your breath every time you went to work, hoping your commute would be uneventful. He could not return to his village for his grandmother's funeral in 2016, because the Taliban might know him, know he had worked with the Americans, including—for a few months—the U.S. military.

There was something assuring about finally being here, Waris thought. People respect individual rights here. There is a rule of law. There is a right to privacy here. The Taliban can't beat you here for not wearing a turban, or for keeping your beard too short, or for playing music. He was born in war, and grew up in war. His family hid in a cave during bombing raids on his village in the 1990s. He remembers seeing the U.S. warplanes after 9/11.

But America has its own hard surfaces—its own vexing internal logic. Everything costs money here, even doing the laundry. Phone and internet are expensive. But you need these to survive. After his three months of benefits ended, he and Alia now have to pay for everything themselves. And even though he has that master's degree, he is new here. He has to take whatever job he can because Alia can't work while she watches Bushra, who is only one. He wants to get off food stamps as soon as possible. He's found temporary jobs, shelving books and working in customer service. It's a start.

Waris has big plans. He wants to bring his family over, get them away from the Taliban. In five years, he will be eligible to become a naturalized U.S. citizen. He wants to—maybe someday—work for the State Department. Someday, he will be an American.

The Undocumented // Juan B. crossed into the United States for the first time at age eighteen, on foot, from Sonora, Mexico, into Arizona. He grew up in the state of Michoacán, Mexico. His parents had a small farm, with fields of corn, pigs, cows, and peach trees. He lived for many years in Chicago, with his sister and her family, and worked in restaurants, where he ended up running the kitchen of a sports bar. The owner was going to open up another restaurant in Pittsburgh, and needed someone to help run the kitchen. He asked Juan B. to come to Pittsburgh, even offering to put him up in an apartment for a whole year.

Finally, Juan said yes, and came to Pittsburgh. In the restaurant, he met a Mexican waitress, Juliana. The two ended up having a pair of children, five years apart. A girl, then a boy. Both were born in Pittsburgh, and are American citizens. Neither of their parents are.

Though Juan is an undocumented immigrant, he does not shrink from interacting with authorities that he comes into contact with. Whenever he calls someone at his daughter's school, to ask about an after-school program or a summer camp, he takes down the person's name. If he feels his child is getting passed over for something, he won't hesitate to tell the person on the other end of the line what he thinks. Once he called to find out about an engineering camp for his daughter. "It's too soon to sign up," the person at the program told him, when he called. "Call back in a few weeks." When he did call back, he was told it was too late—the camp was filled up. He told the person he thought they were racist—"Why aren't there any Latinos in your program?" he asked. A few days later, the director of the program called back. There had been a cancellation; would his daughter still like to come?

If there is anything living in America has taught Juan, it's that no one is going to knock on your door to offer you an opportunity. You have to be the one to knock. He has learned to be assertive after years of working in kitchens, and seeing Mexicans like him be mistreated; seeing native-born Americans—black and white—make jokes about Mexicans, treat them differently because of their accents, and their status as undocumented.

His English is functional, but he is taking an English as a second language course to improve it. His speech is peppered with curse words, gleaned working in American kitchens for much of his life.

He still works in kitchens; one of the restaurants he works at is an all-Latino kitchen. He works more than fifty hours a week, but spends as much time as he can ferrying his children to activities—to basketball practice, art classes, music lessons.

What does he want to see? "My children become professionals," he says. "I don't want to see my daughter working at McDonald's or working in a kitchen. I want her to be a doctor."

Juan does not worry too much about being deported. If it happens, it happens, he says. But other Latinos are more worried, since the election of Donald Trump. They have stopped going to



Waris Faizi

parks. Husbands and wives have stopped driving in cars together, so that if one gets stopped and deported, the other will be able to stay and take care of their children. They look outside their apartments to make sure Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents aren't waiting there before sending their kids to school. It has become a community in hiding.

Gisela came to the U.S. thirteen years ago, from Acapulco, where the drug gangs were brutalizing each other and terrorizing the populace. Her oldest son, Oscar, was born in Mexico, and is undocumented. He is a senior in high school, and wants to go to college. Her two younger children, Felipe, eleven, and Migdalia, thirteen, are U.S. citizens.

Gisela and her husband, Ricardo, work in kitchens. They pay taxes and rent. They make sure the kids' homework gets done. They don't see returning to Acapulco as much of an option: when her brother-in-law returned to Mexico, a gang immediately threatened to kill his family if he didn't pay a \$10,000 ransom.

After the 2016 election, Felipe asked Gisela if it was true they'd have to live in Mexico. Their teacher had told the class that if Trump won, all the Mexicans would have to go home. "I wish this was something the kids didn't have to worry about. This is something that grown-ups should have to worry about, not kids," she said. She told him that if they get deported, they won't be broken up. They will stay together, and go to Mexico. They would be *juntos*, together. But her children are more American than anything, she says. "They are used to living here," she says. "They think they are of this country." Which, of course, they are.

In 2013, when he was fifteen years old, Bartolín immigrated to the United States from Guatemala as an "unaccompanied minor." He had made the trek via bus to the Mexican city of Reynosa. At the border, he was picked up by U.S. immigration officers, and placed in custody while he applied for asylum. Tens of thousands of unaccompanied minors like Bartolín have come into the U.S. from Central America since 2010, pushed out by gang violence, drug traffickers, and stifling poverty. Shortly before Bartolín came to the U.S., his own grandfather was kidnapped and killed.

Bartolín spent two months at a juvenile immigration detention center in Miami before being sent to live with his cousin, who lived in Pittsburgh. During the day, Bartolín attended high school, and in the afternoon, he worked in the kitchen of a Chinese restaurant in a mall.

One day, he felt a lump in his back. He decided to go to the hospital. Doctors found tuberculosis in his spine, which he likely contracted in Guatemala. They prescribed medicine, but he needed to be taken to a clinic every day to receive it, and his cousin couldn't afford to take off work to do this. Bartolín was put into the foster-care system, and ended up moving in with the family of Monica Ruiz, a case worker at Casa San Jose, a non-profit that helps Latin American immigrants.

Because his cousin couldn't take care of him, Bartolín was considered under the law to be a "neglected" child. This was a stroke of luck, as it meant he was entitled to a Special Immigrant Juvenile Status, designed to protect abused, abandoned, or neglected immigrant children. Under the program, Bartolín became eligible to become a permanent resident of the U.S.

The day he received his green card in the mail, Bartolín beamed with joy. "It changed my life," he says. It meant he wouldn't have to worry about eventual deportation; instead, he could just plan his life.

Bartolín is a soft-spoken nineteen-year-old, scarcely five feet tall. He'll get his high school diploma in June, 2018. He sends money he makes working at a restaurant five nights a week to his family in Guatemala. He wants to be a carpenter, and build cabinets and furniture. Where will the future take him? He doesn't know. He can stay in Ruiz's home, and the U.S., as long as he wants.

Making a Home in America // In many ways, it was a standard suburban life: three kids in school, both parents working, sports, activities, church on Sunday. But Elizabeth and Sebastian Gnalian

knew their children lived in two worlds. Inside the house, they spoke Malayalam, the official language of the southern Indian state of Kerala, and ate Indian food. Outside the house, they lived as Americans. The kids went to student council meetings, and played sports. They spoke English. "When I go to work, I am not Indian at all," Elizabeth says.

Elizabeth came to Pittsburgh in 1985; Sebastian followed her in 1991, a few years after they married in India. Both pursued graduate degrees and got professional jobs, and bought a small home in the suburb of McCandless. Yet they knew some would not accept them in their adopted home.

Sometimes Elizabeth's patients would object to her taking care of them. "Why are you here?" they would say. "Go back to your country." When that happened, she would fetch a co-worker. "I would say 'I'm a nurse, I'm here to comfort you, and if you're not comfortable that's okay, I'll send someone else,'" she says. She trained herself not to take it personally.

In some ways, the Gnilians were used to trying not to take these everyday slights to heart. The Gnilians are Indian Catholics from the southern state of Kerala. India's Christian community dates to St Thomas the Apostle in the first century A.D. Christians in India are a minority, and occupy an outsider position in their society similar in some ways to being Indian in America.

"That minority feeling never left me," Sebastian says. "It is not a first-time, raw, stinging experience," Elizabeth says. In South India, Elizabeth says, some Brahmins would not touch the hand of a Christian, believing them "untouchable." When a Christian entered the room of a Brahmin, the Brahmins would step back.

Sebastian, a soft-spoken man, felt completely at home among his co-workers. He remembers how his boss drove him to the hospital when one of his children was born and he was without a car. But sometimes in public, he could feel the eyes of people on him, as if to ask "why are you here?"

These feelings were magnified in the months after 9/11. Sebastian went out and bought tiny American flags, and stuck them in his front yard. He thought of them as demonstrations of sympathy that he wanted to show his neighbors. "I wanted to make sure they understood that what happened affected all of us," he says.

The couple's middle child, Antony, was seven at the time. He was one of the few brown kids at his school. His classmates made terrorist jokes, and he would laugh along. Later on, he began to suspect the kids were also laughing at *him*. Antony remembers feeling uncomfortable when his dad blared Indian folk music on the speakers of the family car. "You almost wanted to distance yourself from your own heritage, because you didn't want to be the 'other,'" he says.

But being the "other" is at times unavoidable. In some ways, the election of Donald Trump—and the anti-immigrant sentiment surrounding it—has made these feelings more intense for the Gnilians. In February, 2017, a white man shot and killed two Indian software engineers in a Kansas bar, after questioning them about their immigration status. A week later, as Antony was going to out to meet a friend at a bar, Sebastian and Elizabeth quizzed him on where he was going. "There was a lot of fear in my father's eyes, and my mother's eyes," he says. They wanted him to be careful. It's something that he's learning to do—he doesn't go to bars outside of the city. He doesn't want to be vulnerable. At the same time, he doesn't want to live in fear. His parents tell him to focus on the things he can control, and not worry about what others might think of him.

Antony works in IT for a large company in town, but he's thinking about going to graduate school in health policy or law. He's also interested in and driven by politics. He was an organizer while a student at Pitt for the Clinton campaign's "Get Out the Vote" initiative during the 2016 election. He got interested in politics after first reading a speech that then-Illinois state senator Barack Obama made to the Democratic Convention in 2004. "There was a line in it that stuck with me," he says. "It goes, 'the hope of a skinny kid with a funny name who believes that America has a place for him, too.' After reading that, I was like: 'That's me.'"



Sebastian, Antony, and Elizabeth Gnalian

REID FRAZIER

Generations // “The Steel City,” as stereotypes go, is a largely accurate portrayal of Pittsburgh’s origins. After the Civil War, Pittsburgh quickly grew from a smallish industrial outpost to a sprawling, smoky epicenter of American manufacturing, with mills lining its rivers for dozens of miles before and after the Point. The city’s population ballooned, from nearly 80,000 in 1860 to more than 500,000 in 1910. The rapid rise occurred at the exact moment when millions of Eastern and Southern Europeans were coming into the United States, and when millions of Southern blacks fled the Jim Crow South to come to the industrial north.

The reeking mills that lined the rivers needed tens of thousands of men to stand in appalling heat and noxious fumes and work the fires of industry. The mills were hungry—they needed puddlers, rollers, steel pourers, and laborers. These jobs originally went to Irish immigrants; but by the turn of the 20th century, they were filled by Eastern Europeans.

Then, as now, immigrants were looked on skeptically by those who had already lived here. They worshipped different religions from native-born Protestants. They spoke many different languages. They ate different food.

The term “hunky” was a slur used on Hungarians, but generally covered the tens of thousands of Eastern Europeans that came into Western Pennsylvania before WWI. The different groups formed communities in various neighborhoods, segregating among those naturally divided by rivers, rail lines and ravines: Poles in Polish Hill, Italians in Larimer and East Liberty, Jews, and later blacks, in the Hill District; The Point, where the Allegheny and Monongahela Rivers meet, was dubbed “Point Irish”; the North Side was heavily German; there were Slovaks in Munhall, Hungarians in Hazelwood and Poles and Ukrainians on the South Side.

These Eastern Europeans were predominantly from the countryside, and came to a country where the frontier was largely closed. Many wanted to make enough in America to be able to return to their home countries with a nest egg, and some did. But others stayed.

Almost immediately, the arrival of immigrants from new countries engendered resistance from native-born Americans. A typical argument: immigrants suppressed wages for American-born workers, and overall, their lifestyles were incompatible with American values. There were fears they would “foreignize” the United States, they were “the rawest of the raw,” too “clannish” and “uncommitted to American Institutions.”

Bowing to this nativism, the U.S. effectively closed the door on these immigrants when it passed the Immigration Act of 1924. The act set quotas on immigration from individual countries, greatly favoring Northern and Western European immigrants over those from Southern or Eastern Europe, or anywhere else. In combination with the Great Depression and WWII, immigration into Pittsburgh slowed to a fraction of its former level in the post-war years.

In the early 20th century, Pittsburgh was truly a “City of Immigrants.” Its population was over a quarter foreign-born; one in two were either first- or second- generation American. But by 1970, the percentage of foreign-born population was in the single digits.

And so in the span of two generations, immigration passed from an everyday reality to something like the city’s founding myth, frozen in amber by collective memory. The children and grandchildren of Pittsburgh’s immigrants became part of the city’s fabric. Their immigrantness, in many cases, faded away. Now, they are just part of the tapestry. They’re not Hungarian or Alabaman or Welsh anymore. They’re Pittsburghers.

WOMEN OF THE GREAT MIGRATION: THE MULE OF THE WORLD COMES HOME

ERIKA BERAS

Not everyone who came to the U.S. came of their own accord. And once they were here, decades after enslavement in America's cotton, rice and tobacco fields, one of the largest mass migrations of all time occurred. From the years of WWI through the late 1960s, 6 million African-Americans moved from the South to the North and West. They came for many reasons. The first wave of migrants came to work in the Northern industries that sought workers during WWI. Others came following relatives or to escape stifling Jim Crow laws and racially motivated murders. The Great Migration has been called the quickest and largest internal movement in history—particularly of note because it wasn't organized. It happened organically: person by person, job by job, town by town.

More than a hundred thousand African-Americans ended up in Pittsburgh. They shifted from mostly agrarian existences to urban, industrial ones. They came by train, bus, automobile. Some walked. And they settled in the hilltops and hollers of southwestern Pennsylvania.

In 2011 and 2012, the following oral histories of women who were part of that migration were collected. A couple of the women were over a hundred years old, others in the decades leading up. All had lived in Pittsburgh for at least fifty years. Yet, their memories of the smells and sounds in the segregated South, of their early days here were vivid. These are some of their stories in their own words.

Why they left. Because it was hard. Because there wasn't any money. Because whatever schooling happened was in a one-room building. Because mother, father, husband said so. Because why not. Because nothing was equal. Not learning or working or water fountains or childhood games.

Ruth Ward was born in 1933 and moved to Pittsburgh from Lynch, Kentucky as a child.

“Lynch was a coal-mining camp. The schools were segregated. At that time, I went to a one-room school it was connected to a church. The camps were designated by number one, two. We lived in number two but my school was in five so I had to go from two to five and it was quite a distance away. The second grade was in camp one. It was at the big school. This was a black school and it went from the second to the twelfth grade. There were a lot of children around at that time.

“There were whites that lived in the same camp but generally the blacks were on one side and you could call it segregated. The schools were segregated and we would leave school say a half hour earlier. The white school was in camp one and the black school was in camp number four, it was a ways away. We had to cross each other to go home. Because there were children from camp number five and four all the way to camp number one so they would let us out a half hour early so we could be gone and get home. And then they would let the white kids out a little bit later.

“One day, I was coming home from school and this white boy threw sand at me and it made me so angry and I went over and got a rock and I was going to hit him and my uncle came behind



Jessica Woods

me and took the rock out of my hand and picked me up. It just made me cry that I couldn't hit him back. He probably saved me a lot of grief. [The boy's] family was there looking to see what I would do, they didn't say stop, they didn't say anything and it made me very angry. I haven't forgotten that to this day. Isn't that something?

"I was not so much aware at that time when you're that age some things come to light but I didn't really think much of it then. Now I do! After I got to Pittsburgh and we were in classes together blacks and whites—it dawned on me."

Ward's family settled in the Charles Street Valley—her father worked as a barber and for the city and a garbage collector. Her mother worked at an enamel factory. Ward attended Howard University and the University of Pittsburgh and married her high-school sweetheart. She worked as a clerk at Children's Hospital. Her husband owned a grocery store on Buena Vista Street on the North Side and they lived and raised their children there. Ward is also known throughout the city as a master quilter.

*They came because what could be worse. Because they wanted better.
Because they wanted different. Because they wanted to live. And
everyone else who could in their towns of Bessemer, Alabama and
Lepanto, Arkansas and Lynch, Kentucky did it. Because that's what
we do. All of us, human. We move. We try.*

Jessica Woods was born in 1940. She moved to Pittsburgh from North Carolina and grew up in Lepanto, Arkansas.

"I was in the South before the Civil Rights Movement and I grew up knowing what was allowed what you did and what you didn't do. Our young boys, our young men were taught from birth what they could do, what they couldn't do. You didn't look at the white boy when you walked down the street, you held your head down, you didn't whistle at them, if the street was crowded, you crossed over.

"I grew up in an area where there were signs that said the N word... 'Don't let the sun go down and catch you out in the streets' and it was talking more to the boys than it was to the girls. They didn't want the boys, the young men out at night where they couldn't see what they were doing for some reason. It was like the white men had eyes in the dark. It was like they knew what every family, what every man, child was doing, where they were at, in the South in those days.

"I walked 5 miles just to catch the bus to get to school. All the kids did I wasn't the only one, some walked further, some walked less. My distance was 5 miles. Then you rode the school bus and you came home the same route. The road I had to go down in the corner there was this big tree it didn't have the leaves. We didn't know why the tree was black. We didn't know it was from fire.

"You had to walk by this tree and it had this limb, and it was the hanging tree. That tree, they would hang them on that tree. I don't know why they couldn't choose another tree if they had to do that. We were scared of the tree. We would run and get past this tree.

"When it happened, you didn't have to go to school and [my grandmother] she would say no school this morning and you'd be like, no school, like a holiday! As you got older you knew what that meant. Somebody was going to die or they were already dead. They had to give time for the men to go down and cut the person down so the kids would walk by and there'd be no man hanging there.

"If I'm not mistaken although that era is gone that tree is still there. There was talk of cutting it down but the last time I was home, and we went there and whose gonna do it and what if they find out that person did it."

Woods spent most of her youth participating in civil-rights marches throughout the South and singing in juke joints. She moved to Pittsburgh from Virginia with her four young children in



Lillian Allen holds a photograph of herself as a young woman



Nicy Simmons

the 1960s to be with family. They settled in the Charles Street Valley and she became a reverend and pastored around the city.

Here. They worked in factories. Opened diners. Sold hats in department stores. Made dinner for steel-mill-worker husbands, kept house, attended church. And despite having left the Jim Crow South, found that racism was pervasive and insistent here.

Lillian Allen was born in 1909 and moved to Pittsburgh from Auburn, Alabama.

“There was still racism here. I was able to get a job at Kaufman’s and I would look at all the clothes and think one day I can get that. I was trying to go to school at night and I didn’t get out till six and school started at seven. They fired me and I did something to make the housekeeper at the store angry. I said we could get clothes cheaper... and someone told on me.

“There was a store in Market Square and they sold me food but wouldn’t let me eat there. I took the change and coffee and threw it in the cashier’s face and I walked out tears streaming down my face. There was a man sitting outside the door and he had a pan and I said, what the hell you gonna do sitting here with a goddamn pan, all you have to do is ask for work and you get it.

“They didn’t show it all the time. When I finished beauty school I went to get my teacher’s license and I got my license from the state ready to do hair. I went to salons and I kept hearing you won’t work here and we don’t have black hairdressers and you have to go down South. They told me I could go out West but I didn’t want leave home all by myself. So I opened a shop. I opened the biggest shop for black people in Pittsburgh in 1944. It was very popular and after all the blacks didn’t have shops like that. It was called Your House of Beauty.”

Allen became a well-known and successful hairdresser in Pittsburgh. She lived in the Hill District, Highland Park, and Oakland. As an older adult, she enjoyed traveling, traversing the world. At the age of one hundred, she traveled to Washington, D.C. to attend Barack Obama’s inauguration. She passed away aged 107.

They watched policy change the world around them. Shut down their factories. Shrink the steel mills that employed their husbands. Watched their kids grow. Don cap and gown and wedding dress and prison uniform and medals of honor. All of the above, none of the above.

Nicy Simmons was born in 1910 and moved to Duquesne from Akron, Alabama.

“We moved here together. He used to work in the steel mill. I stayed here, had babies here until they all got big enough to go out, I got me a job. I left my husband because I thought I could better my condition, he drank too much.

“I worked as a dishwasher at Hilltop Diner up at the top of Browns Hill for about thirty-five years.

“A lot of things I didn’t understand. I sit back and think about things and I thank the Lord that he overcome and let it come to me. I understand that my mother and them didn’t have the life I had, I have a good life right now.”

Simmons settled in Duquesne and worked in nearby Homestead. She raised her children there and all of them still live in the area.

So many of the places they moved to and made vibrant are now blighted. The businesses gone, the mills and factories abandoned, the houses and their lots overgrown.

Wynona Diamond was born in 1943 and moved to Pittsburgh from Birmingham, Alabama.

“Even though I came to Pittsburgh in '46 we went back and forth down South to my mother’s people.

“Going down South, we went on the train and you had to be in a certain section and we could get up and walk around but when you got down South you were restricted as to where you could go whereas up here it didn’t seem like you didn’t have as many restrictions. There were fountains where white people drink out of and where black people drank out of. Irony of it is that the water looked the same coming out. You couldn’t just walk in a restaurant and sit down and eat you basically went in the back. If you went to someone’s house who was white you went in the back.

“They had mines here with the smoke and everything and kids didn’t know about going in the field and smelling vegetables you helped cultivate that’s something children learned down South children in Pittsburgh don’t have.

“Things like how they learned how to clean a chicken, hogs, how to churn butter, make ice cream from scratch.

“We would pile up in the car and we would go to the highway and get the fresh food by the bushels and my mother would bring it home and put it in her big pots and cook it down, that’s something we still had down South, so we still carried these traditions here.”

Diamond lived in the North Side and married a man who was originally from Alabama. She raised her children in the North Side and emphasized that they should attain higher education.

Some of the women grew up straddling both worlds, sometimes in the worlds of integration and segregation, watching the lines between them blur. Even now, they say, those lines are blurred.

Willa Ford was born in 1931 and moved to Pittsburgh from Evergreen, Alabama.

“I came here every other summer from the time I could remember. My mother would do day work. She would go to people’s homes, Squirrel Hill, Fox Chapel, take care of their house, make their kids a meal or whatever.

“I got married and my husband was in the Navy. He was from Evergreen. He had relatives here and he didn’t like the farming life so when he came back, he came here and he got a job in the steel mill.

“When I first came here my aunt had a restaurant on Wylie Avenue and we would help her.

“It was racist here.

“I remember Duquesne Light you could work for them but you couldn’t go around reading the meters or stuff like that. Even if you had the money to buy a house you couldn’t buy a house where you wanted they had a colored list you could buy either. They didn’t want you in the neighborhood. Some still don’t want you in the neighborhood. It was always racist. It’s racist here now.”

Ford moved to Pittsburgh when she was eighteen. Her husband, also from Evergreen, worked in the steel mills and she worked with an aunt at a restaurant on Wylie Avenue. She eventually became a nurse and worked at hospitals around the city.

This migration changed America. And the Southern migrants who made Pittsburgh their home changed the fabric of this city.

BRIAN COHEN

Presented here is a small selection of photographs of buildings used by migrant and immigrant communities in southwestern Pennsylvania over the past century or so. Some of these buildings retain their original function, others have long been discarded. Some were purpose-built, others repurposed. There are old buildings, and new; some serve communities just arrived, others have been gathering places for generations.

Individually, each building represents in part a community's effort to assert its adopted American identity, while retaining its particular sense of self, be it racial, religious, ethnic, or otherwise. They run the gamut, from community centers, to houses of worship, grocery stores, social clubs, and mutual-aid societies.

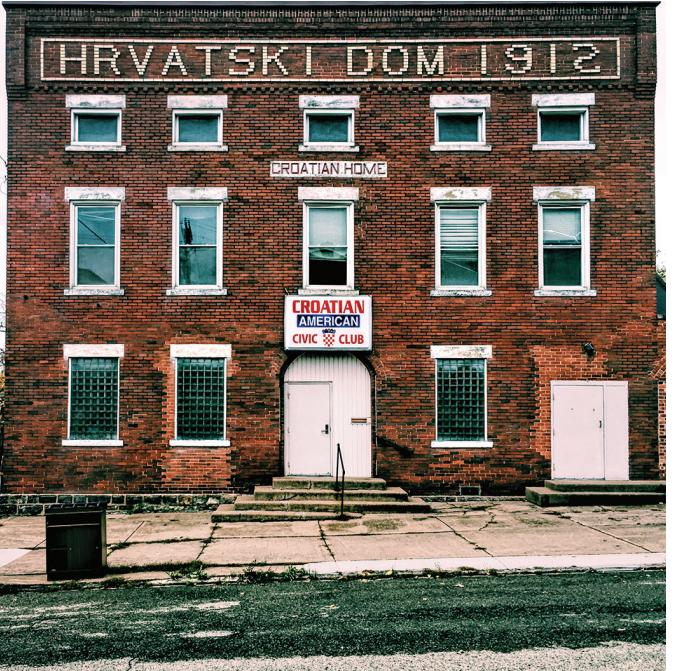
The buildings are the products of people who came to America under a variety of circumstances. Some were fleeing oppression and privation; others came to escape war or to seek opportunity. Some came willingly; others not. Some found freedom and riches. Most faced discrimination and prejudice. Collectively, they form a mosaic: step forward, and you see just one building, one community, one small colorful, beautiful piece of stone; step back, and you see the bigger picture, a country comprised of many peoples, striving to achieve their dreams of freedom and prosperity in the land that is now their home.



Chinatown Inn, Downtown Pittsburgh



Polish Corporation, East Vandergrift



American Croatian Citizens Club, Donora

Croatian Home, Rankin

Croatian Center, Aliquippa

Croatian Home, Farrell

American Serbian Club, South Side

Ukrainian Home, South Side

Slavonic Social Club, Braddock

Slovak American Citizens Social Club, Braddock Hills



Las Palmas, Brookline

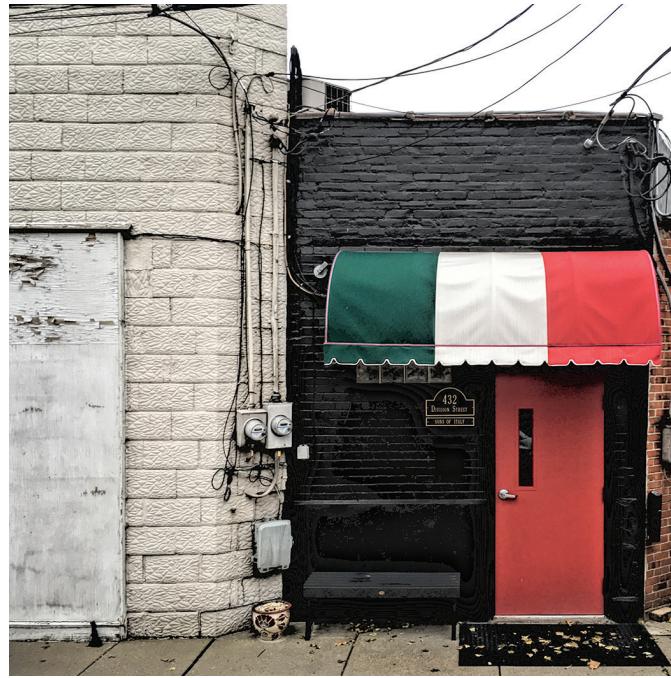
Gogeria Italiana, Bloomfield

Gorkhali Store, Carrick

Pittsburgh Asian Market, Wilkinsburg



Hungarian Social Club, Munhall



Sons of Italy 1277, Sewickley
Sons of Italy 881, New Kensington



Sons of Italy 1676, Donora
Sons of Italy 454, Connellsville





Blakey Program Center, Hill District

Crawford Grill, Hill District

Wemco Club, Homewood

Hill House, Hill District

National Negro Opera Company, Homewood



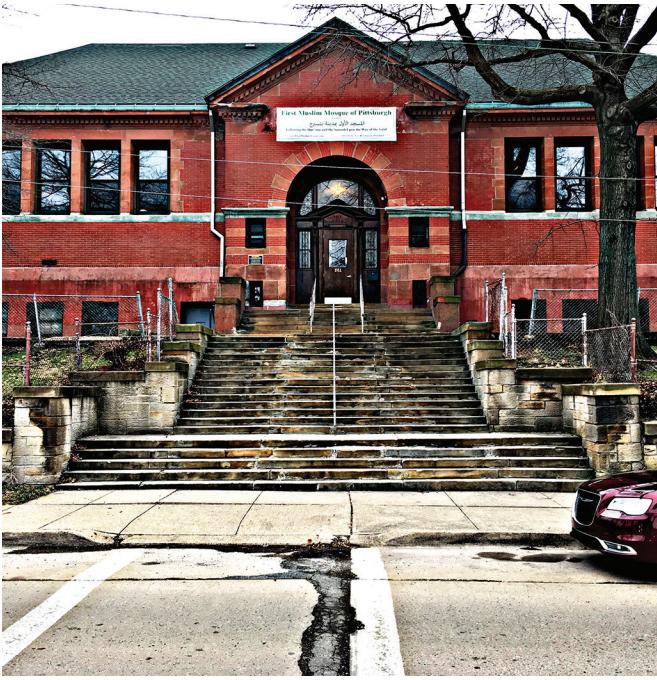
Apollo Maennerchor Club, Sharon



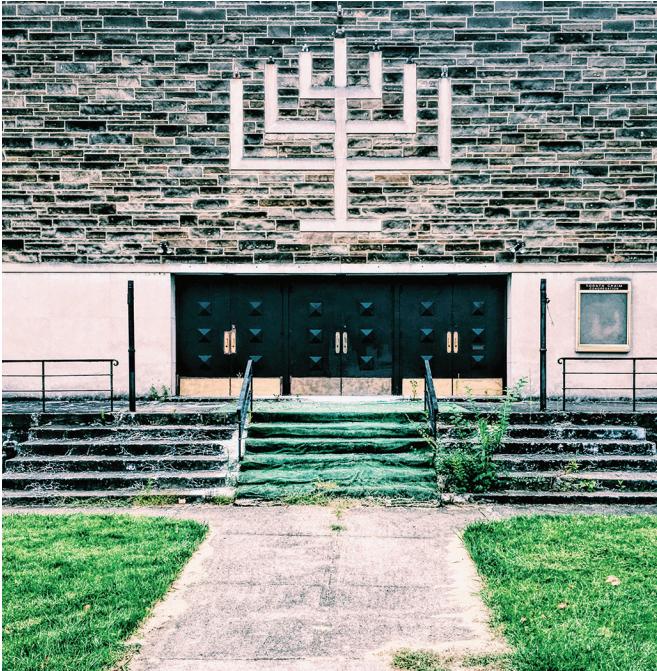
German Home, Farrell



Olympia Banquet Hall, Turtle Creek



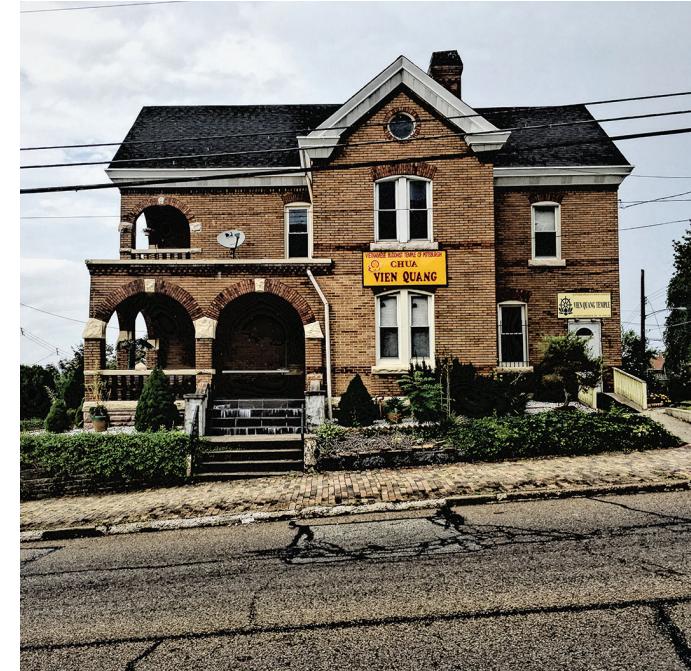
First Muslim Mosque of Pittsburgh, Hill District



Torath Chaim Synagogue, East Liberty



Sikh Gurdwara, Monroeville
Vietnamese Buddhist Temple, Homestead





Irish Centre, Squirrel Hill



American Indian Center, Hazelwood

SCOTT GOLDSMITH

My first thoughts concerned the breadth and depth of the issues affecting immigrants and refugees. After some consideration, I decided to follow immigrants from their very first moments in the U.S. I coordinated with Jaime Turek, Senior Reception & Placement Program Coordinator at the Northern Area Multi-Service Center (NAMS), to meet a family of three refugees from Bhutan, as they entered the U.S. at Pittsburgh International Airport. I observed many firsts, including riding in a car, turning on an electric light, and riding a bus. It gave me the opportunity to look at the many struggles and obstacles—things that most of us take for granted in daily life. NAMS works with state-funded grants (Refugee Social Services, Targeted Assistance Grants), providing services in areas of employment, education, case management, health, and financial support to newly arrived refugees for up to five years.



SCOTT GOLDSMITH

opposite: Refugee Day, Market Square, Pittsburgh, Wednesday, June 21, 2017. One of eleven new U.S. citizens is given an American flag during a naturalization ceremony in Downtown Pittsburgh. After she was given the flag, she received her certificate of citizenship. The event took place in Market Square amid the aroma of foods from myriad countries.

below: May 25, 2017, approximately 3 a.m. Following a forty-eight-hour trip to the U.S., this family took their first train ride—from airside, Pittsburgh International Airport to the baggage hall, landside. There, they were greeted by Jaime M. Turek of the Northern Area Multi-Service Center (NAMS) office in Sharpsburg, PA. From left to right: Turek, Bhai Rupa Rai, Kheena Gurung, Som Raj Rai.





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The day after their arrival, the family are given a key to their new apartment in the Brentwood neighborhood of Pittsburgh. Here, they are learning how to use a key in a lock for the first time. Previously, they lived in the Beldangi refugee camp, Damak, where there are no locks on the doors.



NAMS welcomes and assists refugees as they arrive and resettle in Pittsburgh. They supply them the basic services and support needed for them to be able to rebuild their lives. These include (but are not limited to) finding decent and affordable housing, assistance in applying for social-security cards, registering children in school, and enrolling adults in English classes. They also provide transportation to job interviews and job training, health screening and mental-health services, employment services, and cultural-orientation classes.



SCOTT GOLDSMITH

opposite: The family visits the refugee center they are working with in Sharpsburg—thirty-six hours after entering the U.S.



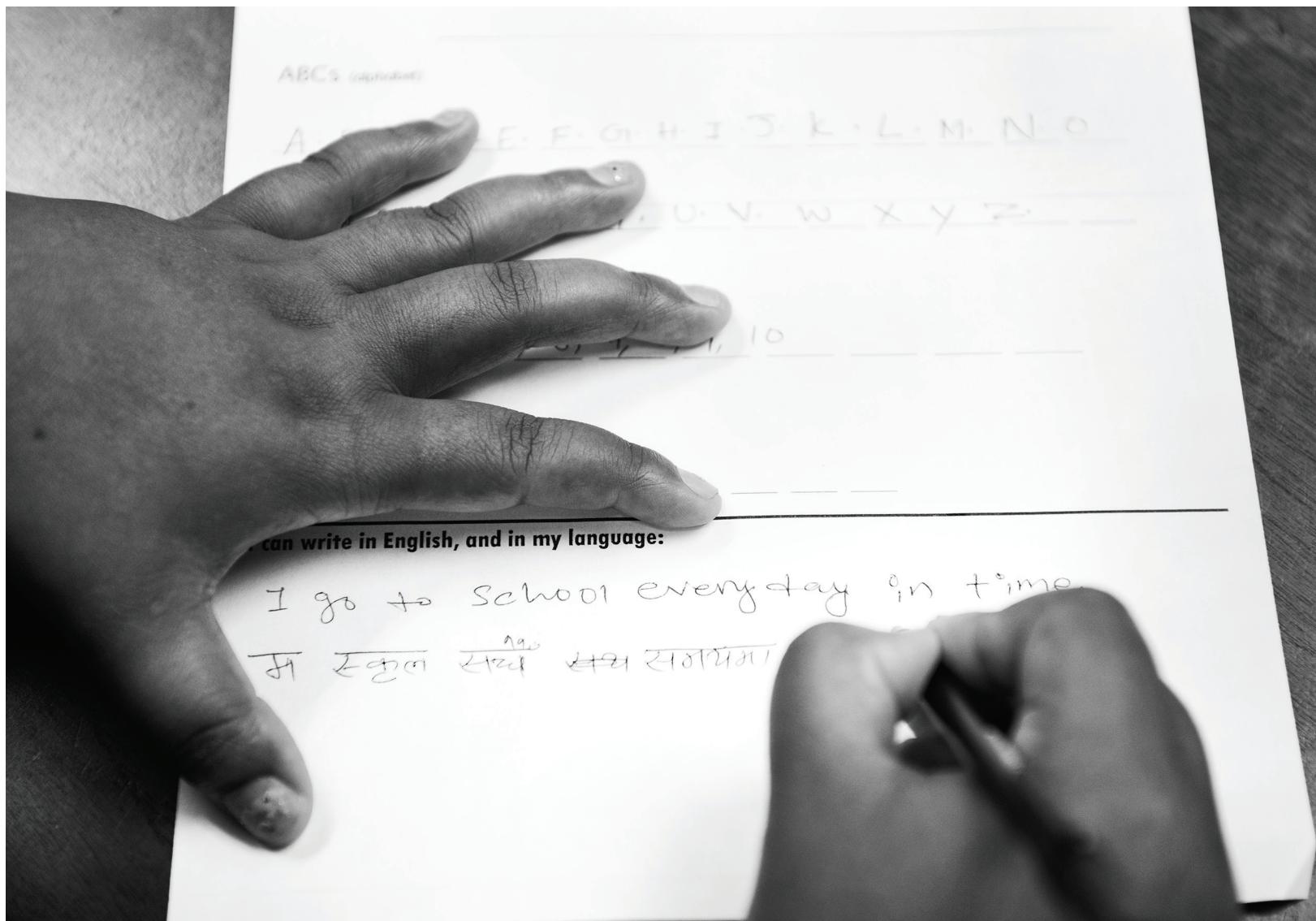
below: Refugee resettlement case manager, Turek, helps Bhai Rupa Rai to sign her name on a social-security document during their first meeting at NAMS, just one week after her arrival in the U.S. Unable to read or write, Rai, age sixty-four, uses an "X" for a signature. The woman next to her is her daughter, Kheena Gurung, age thirty; the man on the right is her son-in-law, Som Raj Rai, also age thirty. The couple are expecting a baby, who will be a U.S. citizen by law.



After their first meeting, Turek says goodbye to Bhai Rupa Rai in the traditional Bhutanese way.

Kheena Gurung and her mother, Bhai Rupa Rai, ride the bus to their apartment in the Brentwood neighborhood of Pittsburgh after their first visit to the NAMS office in Sharpsburg, PA. This is the second bus ride of their lives. They were accompanied by Kheena's sister-in-law, Sumitra Rai, age thirty-seven, to help them navigate the transit system. Sumitra Rai has been living in the U.S. for several years with her husband and two children. They all live in the same apartment complex.





opposite: August 1, 2017. Kheena Gurung takes a test in downtown Pittsburgh to determine her English proficiency. The test is used for placement in English classes. Her husband also took the test, but her mother, who does not read or write, was not able to do so. Kheena and her husband are now enrolled in English classes.

above: Som Raj Rai, making his first visit to an American doctor at the Squirrel Hill Health Center (SHHC) in the Brentwood neighborhood of Pittsburgh on June 9, 2017. The patients and staff of the SHHC collectively speak more than sixty different languages. Staff members realize that language barriers could sometimes result in lower-quality medical care, so when an interpreter is not available, they will use a telephone interpreting service in an effort to provide the best possible care. This family spoke via an interpreter by phone.



SCOTT GOLDSMITH

After living in the Brentwood neighborhood of Pittsburgh for three months, Kheena Gurung made her first visit to a large grocery store. She took her niece, Salina Rai, age nine, to help translate and guide her through the store. Kheena seemed overwhelmed and confused at times.

NATE GUIDRY

Jose Luis Ibarra is a humble man of modest means whose singular focus is providing for his two daughters. “I only want what’s best for my babies,” he says. He graciously has allowed me to document his sacrifices as well as the tender-hearted moments he shares with his girls, ages seven and nine.



NATE GUIDRY

opposite: Jose Luis Ibarra with his daughter Emma Ibarra Romano, age nine, at their home in Brookline on October 27, 2017.

below: Jose helps Emma with her hair before she heads off to school.





opposite: Adriana Quinones, a friend of the family, checks her smartphone while Jose prepares fajitas.
below: Emma finishes her breakfast, while walking down the steps to go to school.



Brianna Ibarra Romano, age seven, plays in the backyard.



Jose gets his Mexican passport renewed during the one-day service offered by the Mexican Consulate at Central Catholic High School in the Oakland neighborhood of Pittsburgh. The “mobile consulate” as it is called, provide consular ID, passport renewals and other services.





above: On the back porch of his home.

opposite: Emma sits on her dad's lap.





Brianna and her dad enjoy the games at
Dave & Buster's.



Brianna and Emma look on as Jose blows out candles on a birthday cheesecake. He was celebrating with his daughters and a few friends.



Briana and Jose with their pet rabbits,
while watching television.

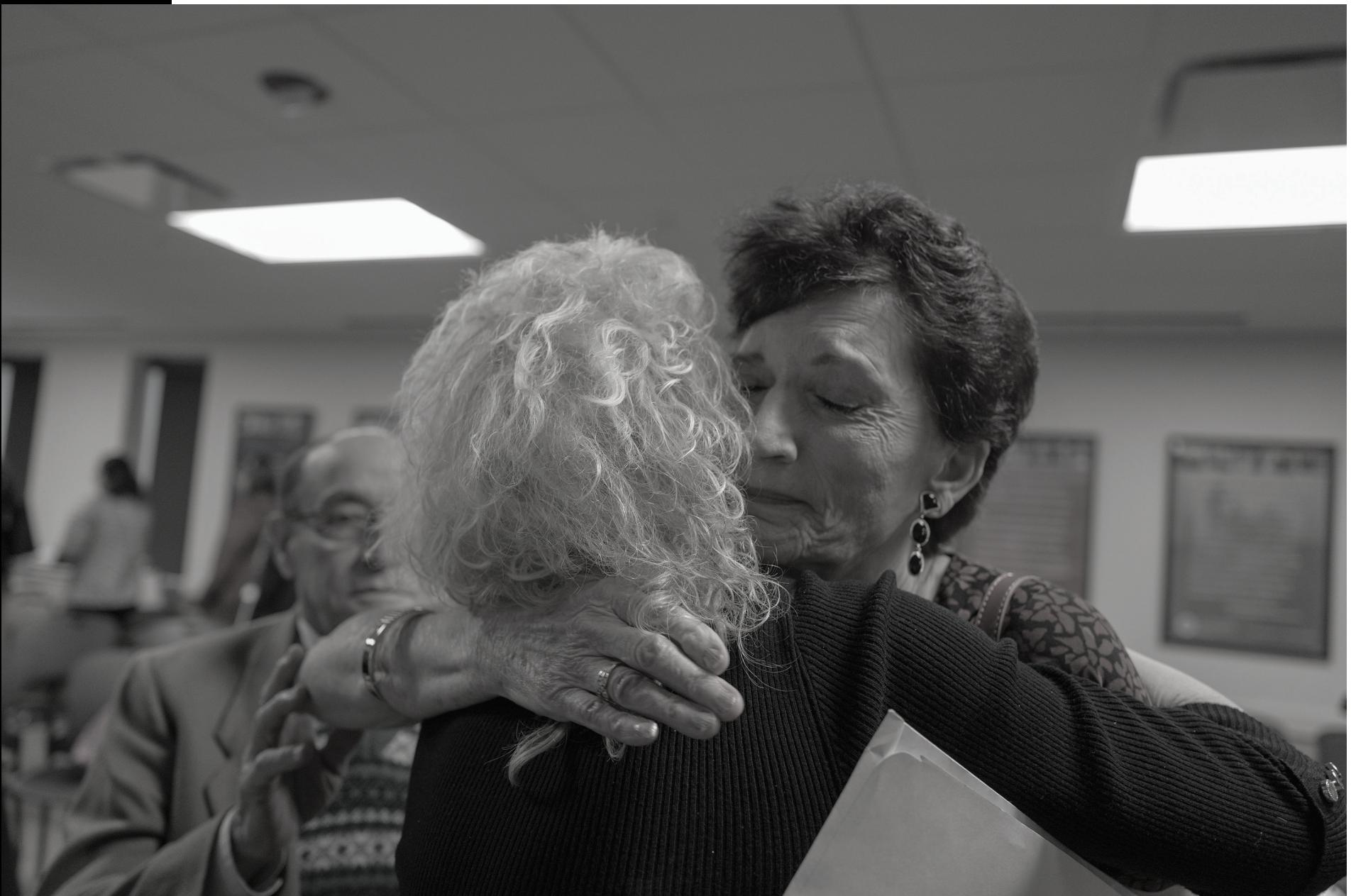
LYNN JOHNSON

Pittsburgh considers itself a community but there are those among us who began life on other shores. We can't truly be a Sanctuary City until we *see* each other, until we *know* each other. These images, beginning with a naturalization ceremony, and continuing with portraits of new citizens, is an effort to do so.

Naturalization ceremonies
October 25 and November 15, 2017
USCIS Office in Penn Center, Monroeville, PA

The setting is sterile—plastic folding chairs with numbers on them, a podium, several large TV screens and, of course, an American flag. But the ceremony is emotional for all who gather here. Becoming a citizen of the U.S. is an expensive and time-consuming enterprise. For some, it takes many years, for others, many miles traveled and reams of paperwork. For all, it is a life passage.

Tears are shed in joy and relief. In several cases, the new citizen suffers from dementia; one might wonder if they really understand what is happening, until you see that tear slide down. Families, some in traditional attire, gather around, helping their elders raise their hands in pledge at the right moment, supporting each other. They even watch respectfully as a video message of welcome from President Trump is played. The irony is not lost on them. They have come too far—through violence, refugee camps, convincing employers to support them, saving scarce money for lawyers' fees, the love of sponsors—to make a sound.







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Naturalization ceremonies
August 18 and November 17, 2017
Federal Courthouse, Pittsburgh, PA

It is common in this courtroom for the gavel sound to decree guilt for the accused. But on this day, there is joy. New citizens from multiple nations raise their hands in pledge to America, now their one and only sovereign nation. They are from virtually every continent of the world having escaped brutality, poverty, no possibility of education. They have come to this country for all the reasons that we, who live here, too often take for granted—freedom of religion, the ability to speak our hearts and minds, access to education and, always, the hope that hard work will be the path to prosperity. But for those who have been forced to cross many borders on the way to this day, it is the gift of finally being able to call a place home that makes this courtroom a haven, a place of celebration.



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Naturalization ceremonies
October 25, 2017
USCIS Office in Penn Center, Monroeville, PA
Mark Phillips, a staff member of the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, sits at a monitor in the room where new citizens are viewing the same "Welcome to America" video. Images of our icons and history float over the screen showing how the strength of our nation has always been in the diversity of its citizens.



Dua Zeglam, Khalid Azzouz, and their two children: Zizo, three, and Zayd, three months, from Tripoli, Libya.

Dua and Khalid are professionals and have lived in the U.S. since 2012. Originally, they settled in Ohio but are now in Morgantown, WV. "It's a relief to have another home. We feel welcome here," said Dua. But the process of becoming a citizen was long and expensive.



Sabitra Subedi is Bhutanese from Nepal. Her room in this modest apartment in Pittsburgh, home for the past six years, is part shrine and part storage for the multiple generations that live here.

Mirza family from Pakistan: Naeem Mirza, fifty-one; Raqna Mirza, forty-two; Laiba Mirza, fourteen; Mohid Mirza, twelve; Muhab Mirza, four.

Naeem Mirza has been in the U.S. for eighteen years. His first visit was in 1999. His company transferred him permanently in 2001. The Mirza children dress in American attire except when they must don traditional clothes for the photograph session. The family, originally from the flat, hot, dry part of Pakistan, stand outside in the first snow of the season in their suburban neighborhood.



LYNN JOHNSON



above: Olya Palych, from Ukraine. In mid-life she fell in love with an American man and moved to Pittsburgh. But she had to leave behind her daughter, grandchildren, and grandparents which is a constant heartache for her. They rely on photos, Skype calls, and annual visits home to Ukraine.



left: Chang family from Taiwan: Po-Yu, Chia-Chen, and their children, Caleb and Joshua, nine, and Canaan, seven.

Po-Yu is a mathematician and came to the U.S. in 2004 to further his education. Chia-Chen followed two years later and is currently in nursing school. The Changs are devout Christians and attend church in the homes of other believers in the area.

right: Michael Nduwimana from Sierra Leone through Tanzania (refugee camps), his wife, Capitone, and daughter.

below: Ibetesam and Mtanyous Georges arrived from Homs, Syria, with their only son, George, in 2001, with a tourist visa. They saw, after two days, the difference between the U.S. and Syria and began to dream of living here. Ibetesam said, "I asked my God to help us and give a chance to live and stay here and everything became true after sixteen years." Mtanyous works in a pizza shop. They recently moved to this home to give their son a chance at the best education possible.



Sister Hilda Uzokwa hails from Nigeria but claims Biafra as her national identity. She spoke at the ceremony—powerful in her conviction and nun's white habit: a symbol of determination.



ANNIE O'NEILL

How does it feel to be the other? This is an experiment: bring two strangers together who have emigrated to the United States. One of the émigrés has been here significantly longer than the other. They each have something in common—just like we all have something in common. Some pairs are both engineers, some speak French, some came to the U.S. for love. Each as the other.

Frederick Douglas was born in Saint Kitts and Nevis. He arrived in the U.S. in 1977.

Michael Schilling was born in Australia. He arrived in the U.S. in 2008.

Both are engineers.

Frederick went to Lehigh University for graduate school. He then came to Pittsburgh to work for U.S. Steel as a research engineer. He currently has his own company with eighteen employees.

Michael was asked by an engineering director if he would consider relocating to America. Michael asked if the move could be to Europe instead. The director said again, "Do you want to move to America?" Michael says it all worked out for the best in the end. He feels there is a lot of support and networks in the U.S. by and for other immigrants that one would not get in other countries.

Frederick: "I think the reason why America is such a dynamic country is the mix of people. People come from all over the world. They bring their talents, their unique perspective on life. And it's this mix that is the renewing strength of America. And I think that this is what has made America great... because people come here with a passion to create, to make life better for themselves and in so doing the entire society is lifted up."

Michael: "The one reason that I would like to stay and very much contribute to the American society, is to is to make a bit of a difference and... contribute something, especially given that I have an engineering background. I would like to do something good. I would like to do something great actually."

"This place [America] allows it—even with the chaos and confusion—I don't think I could be doing what I am doing now anywhere else in the world."



ANNIE O'NEILL



ANNIE O'NEILL

Cecile Desandre was born in France. She arrived in the U.S. in 1995.

Lorraine Digbeu was born in Côte d'Ivoire. She arrived in the U.S. in 2016.

Both speak French.

Cecile met her husband while living in Prague, Czech Republic. They were dating when he was offered a job in Pittsburgh. So, she says, "...as a good Latin woman I followed him." They live in Pittsburgh with their two daughters.

Lorraine moved to the U.S. to escape conflict in her home country. She settled in Pittsburgh with her mother and brother. She attends a local high school and has plans to attend college. She wants to be an attorney.

Lorraine: "We share love together no matter our culture."

Cecile: "I think people stick together and they don't accept so much other cultures or if they do it's reluctantly. Some will certainly do more than others. I think generations are changing [though]."

Dan Boyarski was born in the Philippines. He arrived in the U.S. in 1964.

Sergio Flores was born in Venezuela. He arrived in the U.S. in 1999.

Both came to the U.S. for higher education.

Dan was born to an American father who was stationed in the Philippines during WWII. His mother was Filipino-Spanish. He moved to the U.S. for college at the insistence of his father when he was seventeen years old and studied graphic design in Minnesota. He automatically became a U.S. citizen when he was twenty-one. He started teaching in graduate school, realized he loved it and made it his career. He recently retired as the head of the School of Design at Carnegie Mellon University, where he taught for thirty-five years.

Sergio came to Pittsburgh in 1998 to visit a friend studying at Duquesne University School of Music. Coincidentally, they were holding open auditions for entry into the school. Sergio happened to bring his violin, tried out and was given a full scholarship. He returned in the fall of 1999. He is currently working on completing his third advanced degree.

Dan: "We hung around with a few American friends but we also had Spanish friends, German, French and Filipino friends, and Chinese friends... I remember coming here in '64 and the civil-rights issues were rampant. You know, I mean demonstrations... killing of blacks and all that. I thought, 'Why the hell is it so hard to get along with black people? We get along with all these different cultures in the Philippines...' It made me feel like I'm not from here. I don't understand this mindset."

Sergio: "I never wanted to get rid of my accent... I think if anything it makes me special because I'm a different person. That's what sets me apart from everyone else."



ANNIE O'NEILL

Malak Bokhari was born in Saudi Arabia. She arrived in the U.S. in 1981 for her undergraduate degree, and returned in 1991 after medical school in Ireland.

Nael Aldweib was born in Saudi Arabia. He arrived in the U.S. in 2009 for medical school and then returned in 2011.

Both are physicians.

Malak was born in Jeddah. Her name means angel in Arabic. When she was in high school she felt like she wanted to leave her home country. She said her father was agreeable to the idea but her mother was not. She thinks her mother never forgave him for this. She received her bachelor's degree from the University of Michigan, then attended medical school in Ireland. She is a surgeon for UPMC and lives in Pittsburgh with her husband and children.

Nael was born in Riyadh, grew up in Bethlehem and lived in the West Bank until he was seventeen. He attended medical school in Aleppo, Syria and in the U.S. in 2009. After returning to Bethlehem he was not satisfied with the condition of the health system there. He came back to the U.S. to do research at the Cleveland Clinic and his residence in Pittsburgh. He plans to specialize in congenital heart disease.

Malak: "I am more at liberty to express my religion and my faith the way I want to rather than being pigeonholed into someone's else's ideology."

When asked if she would ever return, "Well, my mother wants me to go back yesterday but... I told her probably when I'm seventy or eighty and I retire. I will return to Medina, where the prophet is buried, and I'll just spend my last years cleaning... and sweeping the mosque and

that's what I'll probably do. Somebody asked me the question if I got any prejudice based on religion or gender? And my thinking is that it was actually more based on gender rather than religion. That's been my experience. It has been my experience as a physician, as a surgeon because I'm a surgeon and in surgery when I started twenty years ago there weren't that many women. But now there are many more but still we do get some biased views based on gender not religion."

Nael: "I think of the way that people think... and the way that people are taught... in the United States. Encourag[ing] them to think rather than just to mold the way they think and encourage them to be... without restraint... When I went to Aleppo University we were not allowed to think in any way beside the way they wanted us to think."

Gertrud Wunder was born in East Prussia, Germany. She arrived in the U.S. in 1952.

Meryembibi Mammedova was born in Turkmenistan. She arrived in the U.S. in 2005.

Both come from countries that are part of the former Soviet Bloc.

Gertrud moved to the U.S. with her husband and five-year-old daughter for more opportunities. There was not a lot of work in war-torn Germany where they were living. They were sponsored by relatives living in New York City.

Meryembibi met her husband while he was serving in the Peace Corps in Turkmenistan. Soon after they were married, they moved to the U.S.

Gertrud: "My aunt and uncle picked us up from the boat. The next morning, we went out for a

walk around the neighborhood and I have to mention this. I saw in the garbage cans these big loaves of bread, not even used, not open, nothing. And we had hunger big you know, we were starving over there at times. When we came home, I said to my aunt, 'What is this, all those loaves of bread in the garbage can?' Yes, they only eat very fresh bread. This is too old. That's why they put it in a garbage can.' I never could get over that."

Meryembibi: "The first year was rough because I came here from a country where it's all about family and we gather a lot. I didn't spend a day without the family. And when I came here I only had my husband and then my parents-in-law. But they live in a different neighborhood and we would see them but it wasn't something I was used to. So, for me it was a shock."





Lake Chau Fong was born in Hong Kong. He moved to the U.S. in 1994.

Santiago Frontado was born in Venezuela. He moved to the U.S. in 2017.

Both are journalists.

Lake was a photo-journalist working in Taiwan before coming to the U.S. to get his master's degree in visual communication from Ohio University. He finished his degree in 1996. This was one year before China was supposed to take control of Hong Kong. Lake's father gave him permission to stay in the U.S. to see how the transition played out. He decided to stay in Pittsburgh to work at the *Post-Gazette*. He married his college sweetheart, Mandi, and had two sons.

Santiago came to the U.S. to move away from the political and financial woes of his home country. He studied journalism and wanted to pursue it as a career. But with the country seemingly headed towards a dictatorship the conditions for journalists have faltered and the financial situation is dire. He is hoping to get a permit to allow him to stay and work in the U.S.

Lake: "Home is here. Home is here but family's there..."

Santiago: "The main reason why I came is because of the current situation we are living in my country... Everything is getting too expensive and inflation is getting higher every single day. For example, one salary per month in Venezuela can be \$2. Can you imagine how to live your life on \$2 per month?"

Saleem Ghubril was born in Beirut, Lebanon. He arrived in the U.S. in 1976.

Fayz Gnamh was born in Dubai, U.A.E. He arrived in the U.S. from Syria in 2016.

Both fled war-torn countries.

Saleem escaped the Lebanese Civil War with his family in 1976. He first went to Iowa where his sister was living. After moving to Pittsburgh, he started the Pittsburgh Project, a community development organization on the North Side. Ghubril, also a Presbyterian minister, is currently the executive director of the Pittsburgh Promise.

Fayz and his family spent years in a refugee camp in Jordan before coming to the U.S. He came to Pittsburgh through a nonprofit aid program Ansar of Pittsburgh. In less than a year since arriving Fayz has improved his English dramatically, learned how to drive, found a job,

and bought a car. He is supporting his sisters and parents.

Saleem: "I find it remarkable that a country as big and wealthy and has so much land as the United States sets a goal of 50,000 immigrants here and is now looking at maybe 10,000 refugees. The little country that I come from, Lebanon, which is smaller than New Jersey today has 1,800,000 Syrian refugees plus 700,000 Palestinian refugees. So 2,500,000 refugees in a country of 4,000,000. So right now there are more refugees in Lebanon than there are Lebanese. I am proud of my country for doing that."

Fayz: "I want to fix the world... this is my thing. When I start, the first one my family, I fix what the problem [is] in my home, after that in my building, after that in my neighborhood... after that in my city, after that in my state... this is how."

Marilyn Brooks arrived in the U.S. in 1942.

Jeff Douglas arrived in the U.S. in 2017.

Both were born in Canada.

Marilyn moved to the U.S. with her mother and sister, around 1942, when she was an infant. Both her parents were Native American. She grew up in Detroit and went on to study journalism in an accelerated program at Columbia University in 1969. She was a successful television reporter for over thirty-five years.

Jeff came to the U.S. in 2016 to work as an intern at Pittsburgh Veterinary Specialty and Emergency Center in the city's North Hills. He was asked to come back to work full time after he completed his studies back in Canada. He enthusiastically adds that since Pittsburgh

is home to one of his favorite hockey players, Sidney Crosby, it influenced his decision to first try the city as an intern and then to return.

Marilyn: "There were times when I wanted to go back to Canada. Because I felt I would be safer there. Somehow years go by and things happen. You know I worked, got married, and had a child."

Jeff: "I think there's a different kind of patriotism in Canada. You are Canadian first before your gender or your race or your age or anything like that. We are all Canadians first. So, we kind of have this... bond working together. I mean I've only been here five months but it seems like there are some larger dividing lines here that need to be overcome."



Mounia Alaoui-El-Azher was born in Morocco. She arrived in the U.S. in 2001.

Ame Koffi was born in Togo. She arrived in the U.S. in 2009.

Both are Muslim.

Mounia's first move out of her native Morocco was to Paris for post-graduate schooling. She moved to Florida for post-doctoral experience at the University of Florida. She is a cancer research scientist faculty member at the University of Pittsburgh. She lives in Pittsburgh with her husband and children.

Ame came here after working for the United Nations on a health mission in West Africa. She came to the U.S. after winning a green card lottery. She felt there were more work opportunities.

Mounia: "I have two kids and they're American now. So my future is here. And I am established here, well established and I see myself just like my neighbor... And so the main thing is that we all have the same goal and our goal is to work for the best for our country."

Ame: "We are not bad people. We contribute to the progress of this country and in America it is all about immigrants. Even Trump is an immigrant. So why hate on us? I don't get it."



Julie Shields was born in Scotland. She arrived in the U.S. in 1999.

Mellita Maharani was born in the Philippines. She arrived in the U.S. in 2017.

Both moved to the U.S. for their husbands.

Julie was a police officer when she met her husband while he was on a golf trip to Scotland with his family. They had an immediate attraction and an intense love affair. They were married eleven months to the day of their first meeting. After having two children and seventeen years of marriage they divorced. Julie runs her own businesses here in Pittsburgh.

Mellita quit her job as a computer scientist to join her husband while he is in a two-year program at Carnegie Mellon University. She is

on a dependent visa so she cannot work. They met in college in Jakarta. They connected on Facebook through their mutual interest in computers. Her husband's company requires that he return home to work for at least seven years. So they will only be in Pittsburgh for two years.

Julie: "I miss people. I don't miss places."

Mellita: "I kind of feel terrified or uncomfortable meeting new people because I am new and I have to meet every new people and it kind of overwhelms me. So how can I handle this?"

Ebhann Campbell arrived in the U.S. in 2000.

John Carson arrived in the U.S. in 2006 from England. (He attended graduate school in California from 1981 to 1983.)

Both were born in Northern Ireland.

Ebhann was four years old when he moved to West Virginia from Belfast with his mother and brother. He was homeschooled and grew up with six siblings and his mother and stepfather not far from Wheeling, WV. He is studying classical bass at Duquesne University.

John moved to Pittsburgh from London where he was Course Director of the Fine Art program at Central Saint Martins. He said he looked to the West for more possibilities in teaching. He

was named the Head of the School of Art at Carnegie Mellon University in 2006.

Ebhann: "My mom told me stories of whenever she would be just like perusing around Belfast. She could be sitting in one place and having a coffee and reading a book and the next block over there could be fights and riots and whatnot going on. But I have no memory of that."

John: "I grew up in [Belfast] in the '50s. And on the whole... you know it was prosperous. My father worked in shipyard... It was a great place. It was a lively place."

When comparing his experience in the U.S., he said, "I do feel the difference. But I do not feel unwelcome."



Iffat Idrees was born in Pakistan. She arrived in the U.S. in 1974.

Fumiko Tezuka was born in Japan. She arrived in the U.S. in 2017.

Both came to the U.S. for their spouses.

Iffat's husband, a U.S.-educated physician, also from Pakistan, visited home to find a wife. Iffat's parents arranged their marriage. She first spoke with her husband on their wedding day. They moved back to the U.S. after their wedding. Iffat had to adjust to living in an apartment with no family around.

Fumiko came to the U.S. from Tokyo with her husband who is in a two-year program at Carnegie Mellon University. She left her job as a teacher, as well as her family and community, to move to Pittsburgh during his studies.

Iffat: "Then, back home, everybody's marriage was being arranged that way. So you grew up with that idea that is going to happen to you and you kind of accepted.

"The lady next door heard me [crying] and she came over and she knocked on the door and she was like, 'Honey what's wrong?' And I'm like, 'I'm just lonely. I don't know what to do.'

"So she kind of became my mother. And she taught me everything. I had never cleaned the house because we have servants back there who do everything for you. I had never cooked in my life. And so I never had done any grocery shopping in my life. And then you learn. Then eventually I learned to drive. Got my license. And then there was no stopping me."

Fumiko: "So for me the first week was really, really tough. Like here I was alone at home and I had no friends. And even shopping and taking a bus is an adventure to me because of my language... I was working in Japan but I quit my job. So I lost my community suddenly and my husband was busy in study and he has a community and a classroom and parties he enjoyed while I'm alone and it was really tough."



ANNIE O'NEILL

AFTERWORD

LAURA DOMENCIC

The model for The Documentary Works projects follows the same basic framework: a group of photographers and writers focusing on issues of social or environmental justice. Each contributor's perspective offers a portal into a multifaceted subject. There is a synergy in the group, an energy that collectively is greater than the sum of its parts. TDW's egalitarian nature is well suited to address the numerous narratives inherent in a topic such as immigration.

One of the most important elements of this and all of The Documentary Works projects is the associated programming—conversations, of one kind and another, that occur during the occasion of the exhibit, or within classrooms, community spaces, and so on. Through powerful images and words, we are able to connect to the subject in a meaningful way. The abstract concepts of immigration, migration or refugees transform into a family's experience of making an unfamiliar place their home.

As with all TDW projects, *Out Of Many* is not only an exhibit and book. It has an online presence as well as an interactive tool for anyone to add to an ongoing collection of images and stories.

Though the project is expansive, it is not possible to be all-encompassing. All around the country, the shaping of our cities and culture continues to unfold. Every story of immigration has its own set of circumstances and affects each area of the country in different ways. Our hope is that this project will create space for civil discussion that can lead to responsible actions.

ISBN: 978-0-692-99162-6
First Edition

Edited and proofread Brian Cohen,
Laura Domencic, and Anne Newman.
Designed by Brett Yasko.

Printed in Canada by Prolific Group.
Photos on pages 9, 10, 13, 16, 19, 21, 22
by Brian Cohen.

thel documentaryworks.org

With this project, there are so many points of sharing. We are thankful to all the individuals, organizations, and foundations who have made *Out Of Many* possible:

The generous individuals that agreed to have a photographer follow them about their day. Telling their personal journey is a gift, of their time and of themselves. We are honored that they trusted us with their stories.

Each member of this creative group has devoted decades to practicing their craft: Erika Beras, Reid Frazier, Scott Goldsmith, Nate Guidry, Lynn Johnson, Anne Newman, Annie O'Neill, Tom Underiner, and Brett Yasko. Their contributions of carefully considered images and words reveal moments and details of these respective paths, providing insight into their challenges and experiences.

Our presenting partners understand the need to explore issues surrounding immigration and migration: Melissa Hiller and The American Jewish Museum at the Jewish Community

Center of Greater Pittsburgh; Barbara Jones, Joan McGarry, Judith O'Toole, and The Westmoreland Museum of Art; Zack Block and Repair the World Pittsburgh; Jeffrey Dorsey, Raiona Gaydos, and Union Project; Illah Nourbakhsh, Dror Yaron, Gabriel

O'Donnell, Ryan Hoffman, and the CREATELab team at Carnegie Mellon University; Edith Doron and Ben Harrison of the Carnegie Nexus, and Divya Rao Heffley at the Hillman Photography Initiative, at the Carnegie Museums; Sylvia Duarte and City of Asylum. They extend the reach of the project by connecting with their communities in meaningful conversations and programs.

The foundations and financial contributors that recognized the value of this project, at this particular time: Opportunity Fund; Elizabeth Firestone Graham Foundation; Hillman Foundation; The Heinz Endowments; The Fisher Fund of The Pittsburgh Foundation; and The Pittsburgh Foundation. Their faith in The Documentary Works is deeply appreciated.

Every person who takes the time to engage with the *Out Of Many* exhibition, book, website or programs expresses a desire to better understand some of the complexities of our country's identity.

Thank you.
Laura Domencic & Brian Cohen

THE DOCUMENTARY WORKS

Published on the occasion of:

Out of Many: Stories of Migration
American Jewish Museum,
Jewish Community Center
October 4–December 28, 2017

Emigration–Immigration–Migration
The Westmoreland Museum of American Art
January 20–April 22, 2018

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WE ALL COME FROM SOMEWHERE. WHETHER IN OUR OWN LIFETIME, OR THAT OF OUR ANCESTORS, WE COME UNDER A VARIETY OF CIRCUMSTANCES; WE BRING WITH US DIFFERENT NAMES, FOODS, AND CUSTOMS; WE COME ALONE, AND WITH OUR FAMILIES. WE COME BECAUSE WE WANT TO, BECAUSE WE HAVE TO, AND BECAUSE WE HAVE NO CHOICE. OUR PATHS ARE INTERWOVEN: EACH INDIVIDUAL'S JOURNEY BECOMES A PART OF THE CULTURE WE SHARE. CHOOSING TO LEARN EACH OTHER'S STORIES OFFERS US A SENSE OF BELONGING TO SOMETHING LARGER THAN OURSELVES.